

Subject: iMessage is the glue that keeps me stuck to the iPhone - The Verge  
From: "Philip Schiller" [REDACTED]  
Received(Date): Mon, 10 Oct 2016 16:08:58 +0000  
To: "Greg Joswiak" [REDACTED], "Craig Federighi" [REDACTED], "Eddy Cue" [REDACTED]  
Attachment: google-duo-vpavic-verge-3.0.jpg  
Date: Mon, 10 Oct 2016 16:08:58 +0000

---

<http://www.theverge.com/2016/10/10/13225514/apple-iphone-cant-switch-pixel-android-imessage-addiction>

## iMessage is the glue that keeps me stuck to the iPhone

Last week Google [revealed its Pixel phone](#), or "Google phone" as Google's [own search trends](#) have determined. The promise of a premium-feeling Android phone, with a new virtual assistant and access to the latest Android software, is tantalizing enough to make even the most content iPhone users consider a switch at upgrade time.

As someone who vacillates between iOS and Android fairly often, but who considers a lightly cracked iPhone 6S her daily driver, I'm also considering whether the Pixel phone is the next phone to buy. All of the

software I use now is available on Android: all of my top email, calendar, music, fitness, photography, task-based, work collaboration, and social networking apps are there.

But one app is not, and that's iMessage. Every time someone has asked me if they should switch, I ask them one question: do you use iMessage? If the answer is "Yes," the Pixel decision becomes that much more difficult.

"Every app I use is on Android, except for iMessage"

Over time, iMessage has become indispensable in my everyday life. If the gadgets I have to carry with me on a daily basis are the bones of my tech existence, iMessage is the connective tissue. It's quick work chats; it's sharing location on the way to a meeting or dinner; it's sending a GIF of a hug to a friend who is having a bad day; it's keeping in touch with mom; it's getting a

series of poop emojis from my niece on her iPod Touch.

Many of these functions are just what messaging *is*, and can be done on other apps, too; I also use Messenger and Snapchat. Google has just rebooted its entire messaging strategy, launching both [Allo](#) (an intelligent text messaging app) and [Duo](#) (the video messaging app below), which [will supplant Hangouts](#) as the default video app on Android phones. But other messaging apps feel like disparate, fragmented experiences, whereas iMessage has collated most people I communicate with into one place.

iMessage, of course, isn't the only incentive for established iPhone users to stick with Apple. Apple's ongoing emphasis on privacy and security helps make the case, especially when it comes to authentication and payments. Another possible incentive is

early access to apps. A lot of software developers I talk to still build for iOS first, despite the fact that the Google Play Store sees many more downloads. This is partially because it's easier to develop for iOS — there are only so many devices to optimize for, compared with the Android hardware ecosystem — but also due to the amount of money people spend in Apple's App Store compared with Google's.

But the main draw of iOS is really interoperability between iPhone and other Apple products, and nothing is stickier in that regard than iMessage (for better or worse). Is "continuity" a good feature? Sure, the Mail app pops up in the dock on my laptop when I'm composing an email on the iPhone, but I rarely take advantage of that. Is accepting a phone call over Wi-Fi on the laptop convenient? Yeah, but the call quality isn't very good and it's a last-resort option for me. iMessage is the core app I use most between the Apple devices I own

or try out.

“For a company that has failed at social networks, Apple has inadvertently built one with iMessage's blue bubbles”

Back in June, when Apple showed off [a bunch of new iMessage features](#) and said it would be opening up iMessage to third-party app developers, some people wondered whether the company would go even a step further and [bring iMessage to Android phones](#). It was a valid question in the "who-really-knows-what-Apple-will-do" sense, but still, [the idea made little sense to me](#). Of course Apple wasn't going to allow iMessage to function on Android: iMessage is the glue that keeps people stuck to their iPhones and Macs.

That's not to say iMessage is perfect; it's not. There are times when that interoperability between desktop and phone just doesn't work like it's supposed to, like when group threads get chopped up into

separate, unwieldy threads. And let's not forget that Apple rolled out features like GIFs and sticker packs long after other popular messaging apps did. And if you have made the jump from iOS to Android, you know just how ridiculously frustrating it is to have your text messages lost into the ether, due to the screwy way the data-to-SMS transition is handled.

But for a company that has failed at most attempts to create social networks, Apple has inadvertently built one with all of those little blue bubbles. Google's new Pixel might very well be the high-end Android phone we've all been waiting for. Its virtual assistant may be smarter, and Google certainly has Apple beat in terms of volume of messaging apps. But for addicted iMessage users, it might feel impossible to quit.



PX-2356.7